

Message Text

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SUMMARY: THE STATE VISIT OF GUINEA BISSAU PRESIDENT
LUIS CABRAL TO PORTUGAL JAN 11-14 CLEARLY ACHIEVED ITS
PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF CEMENTING PORTUGUESE-GUINEA BISSAU
RELATIONS. THE GOP HOPES THE VISIT WILL ALSO SERVE ITS
SECONDARY OBJECTIVE OF ENCOURAGING IMPROVED RELATIONS
WITH ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE. END SUMMARY.

1. BURYING THE PAST: THE STATE VISIT TO PORTUGAL OF
GUINEA BISSAU PRESIDENT LUIS CABRAL JAN 11-14, THE FIRST
BY A CHIEF OF STATE OF A FORMER COLONY, WAS A SUCCESS.
THE GOP EMBELLISHED THE VISIT WITH ALL THE POMP POSSIBLE:
21-GUN SALUTES, HONOR GUARDS, A CASTEL IN WHICH TO REPOSE,
AND A FLOOD OF FAVORABLE MEDIA COVERAGE. CABRAL RECEIVED
A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY, AND A WARM RECEPTION DURING A VISIT TO THE AGRONOMY
INSTITUTE, WHERE HIS BROTHER AMILCAR, HAD STUDIED. PRESIDENT
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EANES AND CABRAL PUBLICLY BURIED DIFFERENCES REMAINING FROM
THE MOST HARD FOUGHT OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL WARS.
EANES ASSURED CABRAL THAT THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY HARBORED NO
RESENTMENTS, AND HAD FOUGHT THE COLONIAL WARS UNDER ORDERS
OF THE AUTHORITIES OF THE TIME. CABRAL RESPONDED BY STATING
THAT THE BISSAU PEOPLE HAD NOT FOUGHT THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE,
BUT THE FASCISM AND COLONIALISM WHICH OPPRESSED BOTH COUNTRIES.

THE TWO PRESIDENTS HIT IT OFF SO WELL THAT DURING CABRAL'S DINNER FOR EANES A PRESENTATION BY A GUINEA BISSAU MUSICAL GROUP TURNED INTO AN IMPROMPTU DANCE WITH BOTH PRESIDENTS PARTICIPATING.

2. AGREEMENTS SIGNED: THE VISIT CULMINATED IN THE SIGNING OF SEVERAL BILATERAL ACCORDS (REFTEL). A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAID THE CONSULAR AGREEMENT BY WHICH PORTUGUESE EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES WILL PROVIDE CONSULAR SERVICES FOR GUINEA BISSAU WAS NOT SIGNED BECAUSE OF A TECHNICALITY. THE MILITARY COOPERATION AGREEMENT WHICH WAS SIGNED CALLS FOR PORTUGUESE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RESTORE MARITIME NAVIGATION AIDS IN BISSAU TO WORKING ORDER, AND FOR ASSISTANCE IN CIVIL AVIATION COMMUNICATIONS.

3. RAMIFICATIONS: A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE GOP HAD PUFFED UP THE VISIT WITH THE AID OF ENCOURAGING BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE OTHER EX-COLONIES, ESPECIALLY ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE. RELATIONS WITH THE TWO LARGEST OF THE EX-COLONIES HAS LAGGED FAR BEHIND THOSE WITH GUINEA BISSAU. ANGOLA STILL HAS NOT APPOINTED AN AMABASSADOR TO PORTUGAL, DESPITE PROMISES THAT ONE WOULD BE APPOINTED BEFORE THE END OF 1977. RELATIONS WITH MOZAMBIQUE IMPROVED SLIGHTLY IN 1977 WHT THE APPOINTMENT OF ARMANDO PANGUENE AS ENVOY TO LISBON. HOWEVER, THE CLOSE TIES WHICH STILL EXIST
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BETWEEN THE PCP AND THE MPLA AND FRELIMO WILL CONTINUE TO SLOW IMPROVEMENT. THE GOP INTENDED TO SHOW BY THE CABRAL VISIT AND THE ACCORDS WHICH WERE SIGNED THE BENEFITS WHICH COULD FLOW TO ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE FORM IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL.

4. COMMENT: THE FANFARE ACCOMPANYING THE CABRAL VISIT UNDERSCORED THE DESIRE OF MANY PORTUGUESE TO SALVE THE NATIONAL PSYCHE BY RESTORING SOME OF THE LINKS TO ITS FORMER COLONIES. ALTHOUGH PORTUGAL HAS CLEARLY CHOSEN THE "EUROPEAN OPTION" FOR CULTURAL, LANGUAGE, AND OTHER REASONS, IT IS STILL PULLED TOWARDS ITS FORMER COLONIES. THE UNSETTLED PORTUGUESE NATIONAL SPIRIT, WHICH HAS WEATHERED A REVOLUTION AND ABSORED THE LOSS OF AN EMPIRE, NOW WRESTLES WITH A SICK ECONOMY AND POLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES. IN ADDITION TO POTENTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS, IMPROVED RELATIONS BWTEEN PORTUGAL AND HER EX-COLONIES WOULD GIVE THE PORTUGUESE MAN IN THE STREET A WELCOME PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST.
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